

Senior Airman Mathrew Kidd, 23, of Hampton, Virginia; Master Sergeant Michael Lane, 34, of Moyock, North Carolina; Technical Sergeant Edwin Richardson, 48, of Virginia Beach, Virginia; Technical Sergeant Dean Shelby, 39, of Virginia Beach, Virginia; Staff Sergeant John Sincavage, 27, of Chesapeake, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Gregory Skurupey, 34, of Gloucester, Virginia; Staff Sergeant Richard Summerell, 51, of Franklin, Virginia; and Major Frederick Watkins, III, 35, of Virginia Beach, Virginia;

Whereas the Florida National Guard members killed, all of whom were members of Detachment 1, 1st Battalion, 171st Aviation, of Lakeland, Florida, were Chief Warrant Officer John Duce, 49, of Orange Park, Florida; Chief Warrant Officer Eric Larson, 34, of Land-O-Lakes, Florida; and Staff Sergeant Robert Ward, 35, of Lakeland, Florida;

Whereas these members of the National Guard were performing their duty in furtherance of the national security interests of the United States;

Whereas the members of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard, are routinely called upon to perform duties that place their lives at risk; and

Whereas the members of the National Guard who lost their lives as a result of the aircraft crash on March 3, 2001, died in the honorable service to the Nation and exemplified all that is best in the American people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) honors the 18 members of the Virginia Air National Guard and 3 members of the Florida Army National Guard who were killed on March 3, 2001, in the crash of a C-23 Sherpa National Guard aircraft in south-central Georgia; and

(2) sends heartfelt condolences to their families, friends, and loved ones.

Agreed to March 8, 2001.

Mar. 23, 2001
[H. Con. Res. 69]

HAGUE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL CHILD ABDUCTION—PRACTICE GUIDES DEVELOPMENT

Whereas 20 years ago, the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction was a bold step forward to provide a uniform process for resolving international child abduction cases;

Whereas over the past 2 decades, the Convention has had increasingly important and positive effects and has grown in terms of the number of Contracting States and the level of interest of other nations;

Whereas there has been an increase of multinational marriages and a corresponding increase of international abductions of children by parents;

Whereas as travel becomes faster and easier, and as multinational marriages become more common, the Convention is more significant than ever;

Whereas on 2 occasions, the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children have convened professionals and experts in international child abduction to examine their experiences with the Convention;

Whereas on both occasions, the participants affirmed their overwhelming commitment to the Convention, but were also unified in the conclusion that there are serious shortcomings in its implementation;

Whereas the shortcomings include—

(1) a lack of awareness by policy makers and the general public of the Convention and of the problem of international child abduction, making the successful resolution of cases more difficult;

(2) the fact that, in too many instances, the process for resolving an international child abduction is too slow;

(3) a lack of uniformity in the interpretation of the Convention from nation to nation;

(4) the fact that key exceptions provided in the Convention to ensure reason and common sense have in some cases ceased to be viewed as exceptions, have instead become the rule, and are frequently used as justifications for not returning abducted children;

(5) the increasing difficulty of enforcing access rights for parents under Article 21 of the Convention;

(6) the need of parents for significant personal financial resources to obtain legal representation and proceed under the Convention and, in many places, the lack of assistance for parents who do not have such resources;

(7) a serious lack of training, knowledge, and experience for judges in international child abduction cases, because there are too many courts hearing these cases and in most instances few such cases for each court; and

(8) in many instances, the lack of enforcement of court orders for the return of children;

Whereas the Permanent Bureau of The Hague Conference on Private International Law has made significant contributions to the implementation of the Convention but recognizes that more needs to be done; and

Whereas the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children has promised to support an effort to produce practice guides to provide a framework for applying the Convention: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) it is the sense of the Congress that—

(A) the original intent of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction—to provide a uniform process for resolving international child abduction cases—is more important than ever;

(B) practice guides should be developed for the Convention that build on recognized best practices under the Convention and provide a framework for applying the Convention;

(C) the Convention itself need not be modified;

(D) the practices identified and included in the practice guides should not be legally binding on Contracting States to the Convention and should be based on research and the advice of experts to help ensure the most effective process possible;

(E) the practice guides should be developed in 3 stages: comparative research and consultations, meetings of expert committees to develop drafts, and consideration of the drafts by a future Special Commission; and

(F) the Permanent Bureau of The Hague Conference on Private International Law should organize the process of developing the practice guides; and

(2) the Congress urges all Contracting States to the Convention to adopt a resolution recommending that—

(A) the Permanent Bureau of The Hague Conference on Private International Law produce and promote practice guides to assist in the implementation and operation of the Convention; and

(B) such a proposal to produce practice guides be adopted by the Fourth Special Commission at The Hague in March 2001.

Agreed to March 23, 2001.

Apr. 4, 2001

[H. Con. Res. 93]

ADJOURNMENT—HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATE

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Wednesday, April 4, 2001, or Thursday, April 5, 2001, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 24, 2001, or until noon on the second day after Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns at the close of business on Friday, April 6, 2001, Saturday, April 7, 2001, Sunday, April 8, 2001, or Monday, April 9, 2001, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, April 23, 2001, or until such time on that day as may be specified by its Majority Leader or his designee in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until noon on the second day after Members are notified to reassemble pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House and the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the House and the Senate, respectively, to reassemble whenever, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

Agreed to April 4, 2001.